

Foster Parent Responsibilities

Role:

As a foster parent you have many responsibilities to a number of individuals: the child placed in your home, the agency, the child's biological family, the team and your own family. Your goal as a foster parent is to provide skilled care, discipline and nurturing for any child placed in your home, while serious problems are addressed through treatment interventions. You must operate as a parent, a behaviour management specialist, a mentor, a guide, a protector, a team member, an advocate, a teacher, a mentor of families, and as a caregiver. This is a big role. We have broken your tasks down to the following:

Tasks and Responsibilities

CHILD'S PHYSICAL NEEDS:

- Meet the child's basic need for food, clothing and shelter.
- Provide adequate personal space for the child with a separate bed and place to store their belongings.
- Feed the child nourishing meals on a regular basis.
- Regularly check the child's clothing needs and keep the child well clothed year round.
- Provide for the child's personal care, health and hygiene needs.
- See that the child is clean and well groomed. Teach personal hygiene methods when necessary.
- Transport the child to all medical, dental and health appointments. Assure the child's medical and dental health needs are regularly checked and met.
- Provide adequate supervision on a 24-Hour basis. (If you are not present to supervise it is your responsibility to make sure an approved adult is supervising the child.)
- Assure that the child follows a healthy, structured daily routine.
- Provide opportunities for the child to get regular and sufficient exercise.
- Administer all prescribed medications as directed. If problems or symptoms develop, contact medical assistance and/or staff immediately. Do NOT make a decision to discontinue medication without a doctor's approval.

CHILD'S EMOTIONAL AND NURTURING NEEDS:

- Provide fair and equal treatment for all children in your home.
- Transport the child to all counseling appointments, assessments, and testing and medical management appointments if required.
- Include the child in family activities, as much as possible.
- Provide fair and equal treatment for all children in your home.
- Express affection often. Demonstrate affection in appropriate, healthy ways.
- Say positive things about the child to others, or in their hearing.
- Understand and care about the child's feelings.
- Avoid hurtful, sarcastic comments. Do not criticize the child in front of others.
- Listen non-judgmentally to child's feelings.
- Take pride in how the child looks and presents themselves to others.
- Seek to establish supportive relationship with child's biological family.
- Never speak negatively about child's family or history. Listen and empathize, but do not judge.
- Model effective ways of expressing powerful feelings.
- Help children advance through the grieving and adjustment process that accompanies removal from their home and placement.
- Provide recreational and enrichment activities that will promote the health development of a positive self-esteem.
- Respect confidentiality of the child.

CHILD'S EDUCATIONAL NEEDS:

- Enroll the child in school.
- Provide for daily attendance at school.
- Provide a quiet physical space for the child to complete school assignments.

- Monitor the child's educational progress.
- Transport the child to any educational evaluations as required.
- Communicate with teachers, guidance counselors and administrators to ensure your child is participating and cooperating with the school.
- Attend any after school meetings required.
- Provide access to after school activities, sports, etc.

CHILD'S RECREATIONAL NEEDS:

- Encourages the child's involvement in social and recreational activities.
- Provides transportation, equipment and funding to engage in custodian/team approved activities.
- Encourage the child to develop hobbies, skills, talents, and personal interests.
- Applaud their achievements.

TEACHING/DISCIPLINE TASKS:

- Provide consistent and realistic discipline and guidance that is age appropriate and does not involve corporal punishment.
- Teach the child effective social interaction skills.
- Teach the child how to respond in difficult situations.
- Teach problem-solving skills.
- Use effective praise techniques to encourage positive behaviour.
- Teach negotiation skills to the child. Demonstrate these skills at all times of conflict between you and the child.
- Teach the child effective time management and how to be responsible for their own lives.
- Teach effective anger management skills. Reinforce those taught by the agency. Demonstrate these skills at all times of conflict.
- Document behaviors effectively.

WORKING WITH THE AGENCY/TEAM:

- Attend all agency/team meetings and participate fully.
- Provide adequate information regarding the child's progress, behaviours at home and school to the agency/social worker.
- Notify the agency or on-call social worker immediately in all emergencies.
- Transport child to activities, meetings, appointments, etc, if this is expected.
- Submit all requested documentation in a timely manner.
- Discuss important status changes in your family with the agency (such as job change, separations, divorce, illness, financial stability, etc.).
- Participate in planing for the child-permanency, treatment, options, etc.
- Implement suggested behaviour management plans from professional therapists, social workers, etc.
- Cooperate and support other agency/team members' roles and responsibilities.
- Communicate effectively with all agency/team members so child does not split authorities in his/her life.
- Adhere to agency/team policies and procedures.
- Effectively use emergency procedures and on-call procedures.
- Recognize when you need help or support and request this support from the agency.
- Notify the agency/social worker of any holiday plans. Allow adequate time for custodial approval and preparation.
- Meet all training requirements. Identify to the agency/social worker where you feel you need additional training and support.
- Attend support group meetings.

WORKING WITH THE BIOLOGICAL FAMILY:

- Provide a supportive, non-judgmental attitude of respect at all times.
- Work with the biological family as an extension of their family rather than an alternative to the family.
- Model effective discipline techniques.
- Model professional team behaviour.
- Model effective negotiating, conflict management and anger management skills.
- Be willing to listen to their story, needs.

- Cooperate fully with phone calls and visitations as prescribed by the social worker/agency.
- Respect confidentiality of the family.
- Provide information, pictures, school data, report cards, medical records, etc. to the family.